

Media Advisory
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For more information, contact:

Greta Johnson
Assistant Chief of Staff
Office of Executive Shapiro
330-416-6889
gjohnson@summitoh.net

Summit County Executive Ilene Shapiro's Statement on Proposed Opioid Settlements Constitutional Amendment

When Governor DeWine asked Summit County and our lawyers to participate in meetings to discuss opioid epidemic relief for all Ohioans, we did not hesitate to answer the call. Based on our experience as a successful bellwether plaintiff in the national multi-district litigation I knew our position and perspective would be helpful. Summit County is working with the Governor's office and communities from all across the State of Ohio in an effort to help find solutions that make sense for all those suffering from the blight of the pharmaceutical industry. The intention is to assist in putting Ohio, as a State, in the best position to negotiate a global resolution with the manufacturers and distributors of opioids.

While the concepts of a foundation and oversight board to ensure the proper long term use of State settlements were discussed, none of those plans were finalized. A constitutional amendment was never mentioned.

As Attorney General Yost's office also participated in those meetings, it is both surprising and disappointing to read about his newest attempt to control both the spending of State settlement dollars and the narrative surrounding the process. Attorney General Yost's amendment is being sought in spite of the continuing work of communities who are earnestly trying to reach a consensus.

I am committed to fulfilling Governor DeWine's request to be an active participant in discussions that help move all Ohioans out of the grips of the opioid plague and into healing. I remain hopeful that Attorney General Yost will find value in consensus and collaboration in these discussions rather than in further attempts to chart his own course.

Rest assured, regardless of where these conversations lead, I will always put Summit County's 541,000 residents first. Local government has been, and will always be, in the best position to serve our local communities.

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